

Spring/Summer 2008

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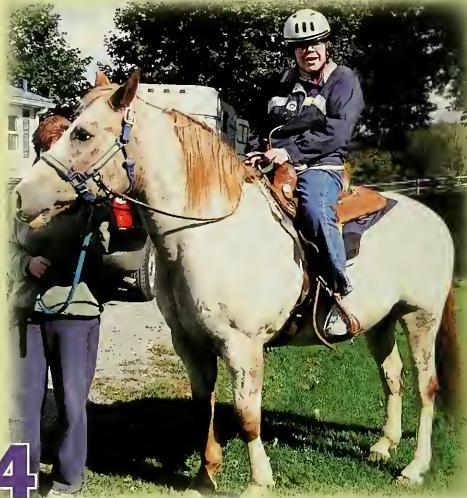
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About the cover photo: Debbie Smith (right) founder of Eos Therapeutic Riding Center, and long-time volunteer Faye Mausteller (left) lead Conner Troutman, age 7, around the ring on Beau Pony. Conner, who has Down Syndrome, improves his hand-eye coordination and recognition of colors by putting marbles into the castle and watching them roll down through the different colored sections. (*photo by Nina Gandolfo*)

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**W**hat does it take to make a good magazine? You could say that the writers are the soul of a magazine; without them, no magazine would exist. We need editors to assign stories and move the magazine through the production process. It's the fact checkers who break down every story and verify not just every quote and fact that appears in a story, but anything that should appear that doesn't. It's our copyeditors who are vigorous in assuring a high quality of writing and editing.

You could say that it is photographers who capture a moment, to allow others to see what they see through the lens, focusing and refocusing until it clicks. You could say it is the designers, laboring over computers, moving items a fraction of an inch to construct a masterpiece.

It's the circulation, advertising, and promotion staffs. Without promotion, people don't know about the magazine; without circulation, there can be no advertising. No matter how good a magazine is, it is useless if most of the copies lie in storage. All staffs must work together.

Without cooperation, production falls apart. Hard work, with sweat and tears, are poured into that cooperation until a final product is reached. It's long hours and dedication, late nights and frustration, but when the final minute passes and you see the fruits of your labor, it makes it all worth it.

We are proud to present you with the Spring 2008 edition of the national award-winning *Spectrum Magazine*. In this issue, we'll take you on a journey through time. We start this issue with a feature on the American Car Foundry in Berwick, taking you on a tour of its past, followed by what it currently is being used for. We line the middle with stories about our present, people and places that are the pillars of this region and make it beautiful. Near the end, our future: a handful of teenagers from the next generation who are taking college courses.

— THE EDITORS

## Flushed with Color: Designs Not Just for the Body Anymore

by Martha Harris

**P**eople, whether they have large rooms or airplane-sized spaces, like to decorate their bathrooms. Any detail, from the color of the walls to the shower curtain to what covers the toilet, add personal touches. Although the toilet seat is usually plain or has a rug-like cloth over the lid, toilet tattoos, vinyl lid coverings with different pictures, give people one more way to personalize the bathroom.

Toilet tattoos were invented in 2003 when Celeste Massullo, a fashion design entrepreneur in Macedonia, Ohio, became bored with the traditional cover and the decorative toilet seat.

"I wanted to decorate my toilet in a creative, modern, and clean way but soon realized that toilet decor products had not changed for decades," Massullo says, "so I created toilet tattoos to give consumers a contemporary and simple choice to decorate their commodes."

The decorations are hygienic and reusable. They are made from plastic film and can be wiped clean.

They also cling to a smooth toilet lid because of electrostatic energy, not adhesives, so they can be used again.

The plastic film has numerous designs. There is Fleur-de-lis, leopard, and zebra print, stripes, and polka dots. For children, there are tattoos with ducks and even a toilet training chart with stickers.

"It provides the child with an immediate connection between the desired behavior and the reward, but it also teaches the child to put down the toilet lid.

After using the commode," Massullo says, "the child applies the reward sticker to the toilet tattoo themselves, which exercises their hand-eye coordination."

Using toilet tattoos to decorate lids is one way to customize the bathroom. From leopard print to wallpaper stripes and polka dots to toilet training chart, all members of the family can benefit from the tattoos. **S**



# End

The closing of the American Car and Foundry plant in Berwick devastated the local economy. Berwick has spent almost five decades trying to recover.

by Chris Fetterman

**B**ill Vezendy remembers the whistle that sounded late in the afternoon everyday in Berwick. For the first 14 years of his 59-year life, the low-pitched blast signaled both the end of the work day for thousands of employees at the American Car and Foundry plant and the time when his father, William Vezendy, would be on his way home.

His father worked at ACF for 20 years as a machine burner, cutting huge steel plates into smaller pieces, and everyday he came home from work filthy.

"The combination of all the smoke and dirt in the air made the machine burners come home very dirty. We lived near the plant, and any men who walked up from work looked like they were soaked in oil. When my dad came home, let's just say he wouldn't win any fashion contests," says Vezendy.

Vezendy, who now volunteers at the Berwick Historical Society, has a long family history at the ACF, as do many families in Berwick. Vezendy's father, aunt, uncle, and both grandfathers worked at the plant, which occupied 155 acres in central Berwick. However, once the plant closed in 1962, Berwick became a vastly different town.

"All of a sudden you had hundreds of workers who didn't have jobs. Closing the plant was a shock to the whole community. These people spent money in local stores for food, clothing, and appliances, and without income it hurt everybody one way or another," says Vezendy.

Charles Kreischer tells a similar story.

"The ACF had all the money in the town; if you wanted a donation, that's where you went," says Kreischer. Kreischer also remembers the whistle that sounded every afternoon, sending his father, brother, and Kreischer himself home from ACF.

"People in Berwick didn't need clocks. They could tell what time it was by just listening to the whistle blow every day," says Kreischer.

Kreischer, now the director of the Berwick Industrial Development Association (BIDA), started working at ACF in 1944 when he was 15. At that time, the plant employed over 10,000 workers.

"That was one of the wonders of the world. I was there when they had 10,000 men and women working at that plant; it was really

Photo courtesy of Berwick Historical Society



# INTERA



The ACF complex was home to one of the largest industries in Columbia County. (Date unknown)

something to see," said Kreischer.

Kreischer agrees that working as a welder for ACF was no clean job. "We worked hard, and I had a hot job. I worked on the tanks, and when we were inside them welding, there was so much smoke and ash flying you couldn't see your buddy standing a foot away," says Kreischer.

Kreischer felt the impact when ACF left Berwick. "That was like a death in the family," says Kreischer. "Our paychecks depended on that place and most everybody and their families had worked at ACF for years; it was really a downfall for Berwick," he says.

The American Car and Foundry plant was founded in 1840 to produce plows, kettles, and other farming supplies. In 1849, William Woodin partnered with Mordecai Jackson, the original owner, to form the Jackson and Woodin Manufacturing Co., which produced iron pipes and bridge castings before entering the railway car building business. In 1899, the Jackson and Woodin plant was taken over by American Car and Foundry. When ACF bought

dollars in the Berwick plant to expand the facilities, construct new buildings, and install additional machinery. The ACF plant became even more notable in 1904 when it produced the first ever all-steel passenger car.

The glory days of the ACF came during World War II, when the plant switched from building railcars to becoming a major producer of war supplies. ACF produced metal plates used on ships, vehicles, and artillery shells. Most notably, ACF produced Stuart tanks, producing up to 10 a day. By August 1942, less than nine months after the United States entered the war, ACF produced its 1,000th tank.

"Our tanks went through northern Africa, and they did real well. Berwick is trying to find one to purchase and bring back, but there aren't many left and they're real expensive," remembers Kreischer.



Stuart tanks receive finishing touches

## 'It was pretty devastating, Generations of families had

out Jackson and Woodin, the plant had become the largest manufacturer of railroad cars in the eastern United States. Following the purchase, ACF invested several million

The ACF plant in Berwick was known for its production even outside the U.S.

"I've read in several different books that Hitler had this plant

on his list of top spots he wanted destroyed. They were always watching for saboteurs," says Vezendy.

At its peak, the ACF plant employed more than 10,000 workers, 4,100 of whom lived in Berwick. Others came from towns across Pennsylvania, including Clarks Summit, Nesquehoning, Lewisburg, Selinsgrove, and Williamsport.

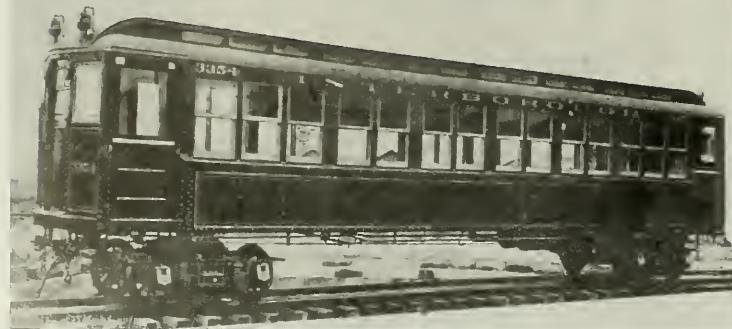
"Once the war started, they employed people from all over. My boss drove all the way from Harrisburg," says Kreischer.

Following the end of the war, ACF went back to the production of railroad cars.

"We worked on loads of railcars. That place had 27 miles of railroad track running through it," says Kreischer, "and each building had rails in it to move the cars in and out."

As a testament to the prestige ACF brought to Berwick, in November

The first all-steel passenger car was produced at ACF in 1904.





ore being shipped during World War II.

## worked for ACF.'

In 1945, several Chinese industrialists visited Berwick to take notes to bring back and implement in China. The Chinese transportation infrastructure was badly damaged during the war, and to quickly improve their railways, the Chinese toured the Berwick plant because they believed it was among the most efficient in America.

"ACF was the bread and butter of this town," says Kreischer, "and Berwick was known for its hard workers. We produced almost anything, and we produced it well."

During the next decade, trends in shipping moved from railways to highways as business took advantage of the reality that trucks could deliver orders directly to a location.

"The plant went through cycles. There would be a six month period where there were a lot of orders, and business was good. Then there would be a six month

period where the orders slowed down and people didn't have work until more orders came in," says Vezendy.

Inevitably, the decline of the railway industry caught up to the ACF. "Rumors had been going around town about the plant closing. It came down to a choice for the ACF. They could spend a lot of money and do a lot of remodeling at the Berwick plant," says Vezendy, "or they could spend more money on their smaller plants around the country."

On Tuesday, Nov. 9, 1961, the residents of Berwick awoke to find the front page headline of *The Morning Press* announcing the closing of the ACF. Though the ACF would remain open to finish all current orders, by the following November, ACF expected to be out of Berwick.

According to William Taylor, ACF chairman of the Board, the centers of rail traffic growth had moved south and west away from the East Coast, and it was no longer cost efficient to ship railcars from Berwick to its customers.

The announcement raised alarms in state government and in local government. Governor David Lawrence and the local steelworkers union both set up meetings with Taylor to discuss the possibility of ACF staying in Berwick, but no agreement could be reached.

The announcement also made a splash at the national level. Sev-

eral days after the news of the ACF closure broke, NBC sent television crews to film a segment in Berwick for their nationally televised *Here and Now* program.

There was good reason for the fear of the effects the departure of ACF may have. At the time it closed, the ACF provided nearly 40 percent of Berwick's industrial employment.

"The local people stuck together as best they could," says Kreischer, "but the ACF was the highest paying employer in the area and when you take all that money out of the economy, it hurts. A lot of people left the area, and a lot retired."

After a steady yearly increase between 1954 and 1960, Columbia County businesses paid out on average over \$10,000 less per person in wages in 1963 than they did in 1960. Similar changes can be seen in the wages brought in by residents of Columbia County. The wages brought in by resi-



The assembly line  
of Stuart Tanks



William Vezendy shows off the original ACF whistle, now in the Berwick Historical Society.

dents also increased yearly from 1954 to 1960. By 1963, personal wages had dropped by nearly \$5,000.

In August 1962, BIDA purchased the 155 acre ACF plant for nearly \$2.5 million.

"The closure of the ACF facility defined the meaning of BIDA because they became the owner of the facility,"

several hundred, leaving over 2,000 people without work or income.

"It was pretty devastating. Generations of families had worked for ACF and Jackson and Woodin. Some people left Berwick and followed the company west to Missouri," says Phillips.

The employment impact the de-

says Stephen Phillips, the current executive director of BIDA.

Once ACF left Berwick, the Berwick Forge and Fabricating Company became the first business to move into some of the numerous unoccupied buildings left behind by the ACF. Though Berwick Forge and Fabricating attempted to ease the pain of the ACF vacating, it could not provide the jobs ACF did. At the time it closed, ACF employed about 2,800 people. When Berwick Forge and Fabricating opened, there were only enough jobs for sev-

eral hundred, leaving over 2,000 people without work or income.

parture of ACF left on Berwick was immediately evident. Between 1960 and 1963 the number of people employed in Columbia County dropped by nearly 20 percent, and the number of people employed in manufacturing jobs dropped nearly 25 percent, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry.

Kreischer remembers how big a part of everyday life ACF played.

"Half the homes in Berwick were built by lumber from this place, they had their own general store where everybody bought their clothes, food, and supplies," says Kreischer. "They had a baseball team and a band, the ACF even heated some of the buildings in the town with excess steam from the plants. They had everything we needed," he says.

Since the departure of ACF, the biggest addition to the local economy was the addition of the Susquehanna Steam Electric Plant. The \$4.1 billion nuclear power plant, which employed more than 5,000 persons at its peak over a 10-year construction period, went online with its first reactor in June 1983 and its second reactor in February 1985.

"That helped lessen the blow a little bit," Vezendy recalls.

Following the purchase by BIDA, numerous companies have come and gone in the ACF complex. "The public thinks that there isn't a lot going on there," says Phillips, "but that's a misconception. Over half the existing buildings are now in the private sector." Currently, 16 businesses employ about 1,250 people. These companies include Millridge, a printing company; Cheetah Chassis, which manufactures container chassis; Berwick Offray, the world's largest manufacturer and distributor of ribbon and bows; and several mobile home constructors. However not all the space has been rented, including over 20 acres which are available for purchase, and three 10,000 square foot shell factories which are available for lease or purchase.

Photo courtesy of, ACF Archives, John W. Barriger III National Railroad Library, Univ. of Missouri - St. Louis.



Workers in 1948 near completion on a subway car for New York City.



Photo: Columbia County Historical Society

Henry English, Herman Amble, and Guy Beoshline and the 1,000th tank.

Phillips believes it is not entirely bad that ACF left Berwick. "I think ACF leaving forced Berwick to diversify. When there's only a single employer," says Phillips, "the town is at the mercy of that employer. I'd rather have 10 companies which employ 200 people each than one company which employs 2,000 people."

Of the original ACF buildings, many have been torn down and those still standing have been repaired and remodeled, however one that still stands exactly as it was is the power plant which

supplied the entire ACF complex.

"We'd like to have it taken down, but there's just too much steel and concrete. We'll need some help paying for it if we want to bring somebody in and tear that place apart," says Kreischer. As the buildings are repaired and the railroad tracks are torn out of the ground, the former ACF power plant remains as one of the last untouched relics of Berwick's great industrial era. **S**

The power plant remains the only building left untouched.



Photo by Chris Fetterman

A large orange graphic featuring the number "30" in a stylized font. Below it, the words "YEARS" are written in a serif font. Underneath that is a circular logo with concentric rings. Below the circle, the text "BLOOMSBURG" is in a small sans-serif font, followed by "Theatre" in a larger, cursive, italicized font, and "ENSEMBLE" in a smaller sans-serif font.

07/08 SEASON

A poster for the play "Incorruptible" by Michael Hollinger. It features a silhouette of a jester's head with a red and yellow jester's cap. The title "Incorruptible" is in a large, decorative font above the author's name. The date "May 1 through 18, 2008" is at the bottom.

May 1 through 18, 2008

A poster for the play "NOT FOR EVERY BODY" by Richard Greenberg. It features a dark, abstract image of what might be a city or industrial scene at night. The title is at the top right, and the subtitle "The 2008 Intern Project" is below it. The date "May 28 through June 1, 2008" is at the bottom.

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# BARBERSHOP

by Justin Strawser

## GOLD

**E**very Tuesday night at 7:30, Chuck Root joins the West Branch Chorus at Beaver Memorial United Methodist Church, Lewisburg. West Branch is an all-men's choir dedicated to singing classic music from long ago when elderly men were still young.

It's not just music. It's barbershop gold.

Although not every member of the West Branch Chorus is part of a quartet, Root's group, ages ranging from 69 to 75, is known as Enduring Chords. They have been entertaining crowds small and large since 2005, although Root and Ed Abrahims, the lead, have been singing together in barbershop for over 25 years.

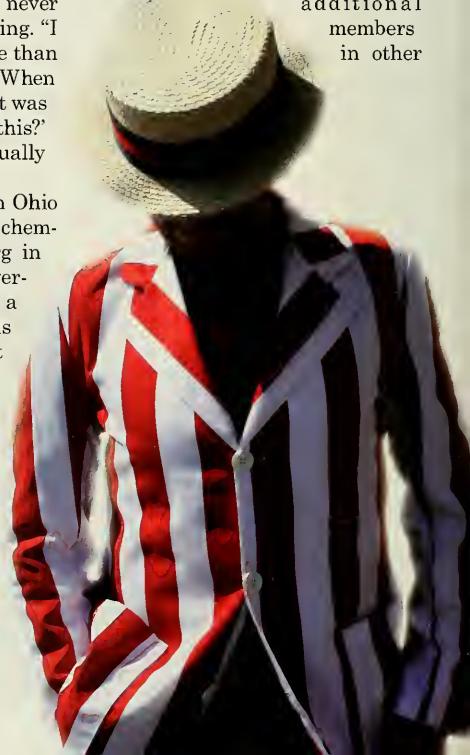
Root, tenor, isn't a professional musician. He doesn't have any CDs of his singing. He didn't even major in music while in college—he chose chemistry instead. "I was fortunate enough that I had a strong musical background," says Root. In addition to the quartet, Root plays the french horn, trumpet, and recorder, has conducting experience, and has been involved in the Lewisburg Opera Ensemble. But it's barbershop that has become his favorite hobby.

Root's first experience with barbershop was in East Rochester (N.Y.) High School when his music instructor put him in a quartet for a short time. When he reached college, chemistry didn't stifle his love of music. He joined a quartet and never passed up an opportunity to sing. "I think I enjoyed my music more than some of the music majors. When they were asked to do things, it was always, 'gosh, do I have to do this?' I could have said no, but I usually said yes," Root says.

After earning a Ph.D. from Ohio State University in inorganic chemistry, he moved to Lewisburg in 1965 to join Bucknell University's faculty, but not even a new hometown could stop his passion. He joined the West Branch Chorus, a group that practices the barbershop style, and formed a quartet. In 2005, he and Abrahims recruited Al Wilcox and Bill Laverty as baritone and bass. Although Wilcox has been in other quartets, this is Laverty's first experience. "He's loving it," says Root.

Root and the Enduring

Chords are not the only ones who have fallen for the enjoyable sound of barbershop. The Barbershop Harmony Society has about 30,000 members in North America, with additional members in other



Photos by Nina Gandalfo



The West Branch Choir sings to Nottingham Village. Members are (from left to right) Dale Thomas, Chuck Root, Ed Abrahims, Doug Rhoads, Joel Turrel, Jim Cotner, Ernie Rogers, Ken Paulhamus, Jay Spangenburg, and Ed Bordy.

countries. Barbershop singing goes back to the 1600s. It was popularized in America during the early 1900s in barbershops, street corners, social functions, and parlors.

Although it can easily be mistaken for *a capella* since it shares the characteristic of music with no instrumental background, it has its own set of rules. For instance, there are only four singers—the tenor, the lead, the baritone, and the bass. The melody is usually sung by the lead, but it can also move to another part for a short time. Barbershop is also known for its ringing accord. This helps create the illusion that more than four people are singing.

"There are a certain number of seventh chords and a lack of several combinations," says Root. He also explains that it can be challenging to be part of a quartet. "There's no one else who sings your part. You have to hold your own. You have to be a good listener," he says.

Enduring Chords has sung at birthday parties, picnics, anniversaries, nursing homes, and other special events. It's non-profit but charges for its form of entertainment: \$125 for a half-hour. Its \$35

Valentine special consists of two songs, a rose, a box of candy, and a Polaroid picture. "The money goes towards music, outfits, food if we're eating out," says Root, who explains that it isn't their livelihood and if they didn't charge, it would become an expensive hobby.

When barbershop quartet comes to mind, the same image usually pops up in everyone's head—four men in striped shirts, bowties, and a goofy-looking hat, all ready to serenade with a rendition of "Coney Island Baby." Although Enduring Chords doesn't fit that particular view, its



Photo courtesy of Al Wilcox

The West Branch Chorus serenades the residents of the Nottingham Village, Northumberland, in March. The chorus includes four different barbershop quartets—Enduring Chords, According to Dad, Leisure Aires, and WB 4. The chorus was organized in 1975.



Shelly Messner



Amber Carnuccio

image is more what one would expect. However one image that would rarely make an appearance is the formation of young women, all college age, all eagerly singing the same style, but not the usual songs one might hear in a traditional quartet.

That's exactly what Consonance is doing.

"It hinders us a lot because people have no idea," says Erin Linkoski, a sophomore majoring in medical imaging at Bloomsburg University. She explains that even her roommates haven't a clue. "I recorded us on my phone and I showed them. They said, 'Wow! You sound really good.' I don't think they expected that. They thought it would be—" she pauses, looking for the right word.

"Boring music," suggests Emily Hollick, a sophomore majoring in marketing at BU.

Linkoski agrees and adds, "We were singing bluesy stuff. They didn't think you could do that." Linkoski and Hollick, along with Shelly Messner, a senior majoring in elementary education and special education at BU; and Amber Carnuccio, who attends Empire Beauty School in Selinsgrove, have called themselves Consonance since June 2006, but they have been involved in music, together and separately, much longer.

Consonance isn't the only female barbershop quartet. Sometimes called beauty shop quartet, the women's division has been divided into two major divisions— Harmony Inc. and the Sweet Adelines Int'l., known as the world's largest singing organiza-

tion for women. With nearly 30,000 members worldwide, the Sweet Adelines was founded in 1945. Unlike other women choirs, these women's quartets have bass and baritone.

Much of the credit for their passion in Consanance is given to Bonnie Klinger, their music teacher at Shamokin High School, and Dale Thomas, head of the Bloomsburg chapter. Students in the Shamokin music curriculum had the option of forming and being trained in a barbershop harmony. Messner, who was part of a quartet with Hollick and Carnuccio, was also a grade above her fellow barbershop buddies.

"I was excited to graduate, move on, and go to college," Messner says, "but quartet was the only thing I wanted to stay in high school for. I cried during graduation when they came up to me."

It would be another year before the rest of the girls followed Messner into college. Once graduated, they quickly recruited Linkoski to form their amateur group. "Of course, we wanted Shelly back so we begged her," Hollick says, laughing with the others. She adds, "We didn't have to beg too much."

Once it was decided that they were interested in pursuing barbershop on a regular basis, the girls would have to have a name. They wanted something unique, catchy, and explained exactly what they were. They found the word *consonance*, which stems from a Latin word for "coming together," and

"They said, 'Wow! You sound really good.' I don't think they expected that."

—Erin Linkoski



Emily Hollick



Erin Linkoski



Consonance rehearses a new song.

is also a musical term for harmony.

"It could have two meanings because we found each other, we came together, and now we make harmony," says Linkoski.

"And you can't make harmony without others," Messner adds.

Hollick believes the meaning of the name doesn't only apply to them as a musical entity, but rather their relationship with each other. "We wouldn't progress as a group if we didn't know each other," she says.

Carnuccio is the bass and is described as the feisty one. Her role in the quartet is the foundation for all other parts. "Amber has such a passion for this," says Messner, explaining that she's a determined individual who will do anything she puts her mind to.

"I'm the loudest and silliest. I'm very outgoing and love meeting new people. I make us a lot of friends at events," says Carnuccio.

Messner, the baritone, says her love for music started at an early age. While her brothers were participating in musical programs, Messner says, "I followed in their footsteps. Eventually I owned the passion for myself."

When Carnuccio described their baritone as the "quartet mom," Messner laughed in agreement. "That's

right. I'm the parent," she says. Messner clarifies by saying, "I try to work on our image, to make sure that we are fun but still professional."

Hollick and Linkoski share the position of lead while the other sings tenor. The role of the lead is to be able to tell the story of the song with their singing and facial expressions. Linkoski believes she works better as tenor than a lead. Hollick doesn't agree. "It depends on the song. Our personalities have to fit, too, not just our voice," she says.

Linkoski has been in musical programs since elementary school and is still currently participating in such programs in college life.

"She has a laser voice. Focused and strong. Barbershop people are like, 'Oh, you have a laser voice. That's awesome!'" says Messner. When she discusses Hollick, she says, "Emily can tell a story. She is easy to back up because she makes you see it her way."

Hollick is the group's scheduler. "She keeps track of things and makes all the phone calls," says Linkoski.

They practice as often as they can and have a show at least once a month. "If our sound was just as good but we were older men, I don't think we would have as many shows as we do now," says Messner.

Even the official members of the Barbershop Harmony Society chapters give them full support. They encourage the young women to keep singing, organize shows for them to sing at, even donate money. They say there's a

For more information  
or to schedule a  
barbershop quartet  
to visit your  
party, contact:

**Consonance**

consonancequartet@hotmail.com

**Enduring Chords**

570-524-4848

**According to Dad**

570-447-3312

**Leisure Aires**

570-326-0816

**New Found Sound**

570-387-7918

**Old Stuff:** 570-784-7272

**WB4:** 570-323-5564

lot of encouragement to keep the barbershop tradition. And more often than not, they are received positively from their audience.

Each of them would like to continue barbershop, and even if they can't continue to sing with each other, they will continue their passion and harmony.

No matter who is singing, male or female, young or old, barbershop continues to capture the attention of many and entertain even more. Perhaps that is what makes it gold. **S**



by Annelise Chayka

Carol Busada takes pride in the dinner she serves her husband and five children. Amid her busy schedule, Busada takes the time to buy locally raised beef, poultry, and eggs. She purchases her beef directly from Rohrbach's Farm, and buys her poultry and egg products from Bloom Naturally, a holistic health food store in Bloomsburg carrying locally raised meat.

"The labels in the supermarket can be difficult to understand for many consumers who do not know how the labels are regulated and defined. It's best to know the person who raises the animals," says Busada.

Although some labels on meat products are informative, others can be misleading. The definition for "all natural" is often misinterpreted by consumers.

"I prefer not having hormones or antibiotics in my meat," says Busada. She says that buying locally "helps guarantee I know what I am get-

ting, and how it was raised."

Health concerns and label confusion cause many consumers to turn to the local meat market.

"Consumers are communicating support for natural local food by increasing the demand, which is leading to more local farms and farm markets," says Todd Hopkins, co-owner of Forks Farm in Orangeville.

Understanding how livestock is raised enables consumers to choose food from farmers who don't use chemicals, pesticides, hormones, or antibiotics.

"With all the issues surrounding the meat and labeling industry, consumers are gaining interest in farming practices," says Rachel Litchiler-Ribble, co-owner of Spring Meadows Farm, Orangeville.

Her husband agrees. "The direct relationship we maintain with our customers is key. Many customers will come to the farm to experience the atmosphere and understand how

the animals are being raised," says Kris Ribble.

Meat packages boasting "no hormones added" may be misleading. Although the FDA prohibits hormones in poultry and pork products, antibiotics have replaced them.

The Federal Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, reviews all labels on meat, poultry and processed egg products, including the "all natural" label. To obtain this label, the product must be minimally processed and free of artificial flavor, coloring ingredients, and chemical preservatives.

The FSIS has a continuous presence in the slaughterhouse, and conducts daily inspections in processing plants.

"We will not approve a label if the product does not meet our standards," says Amanda Eamich, FSIS spokeswoman.

Many consumers assume "all

# Regulated Claims

To obtain one of these labels the farmer must provide documentation citing the feed formula, operational protocol, and affidavits and testimonials.

- Raised without added hormones
- Raised without antibiotics
- Not fed animal by products
- Free Range
- Corn-fed
- Grain-fed
- Grass-fed



“natural” pertains to the manner in which the animals were raised. However, it only includes slaughtering and processing techniques. Consumers often mistake the “all natural” label to mean “naturally raised.”

“Currently there is no ‘naturally raised’ standard; however, there may be a marketing standard in the future,” says Jimmie Turner, spokesman for Agricultural Marketing Services (AMS).

A commonly debated topic in the “naturally raised” label is the use of antibiotics and antimicrobial agents for the use of disease control, disease prevention, and growth promotion.

Because of the rising global demands for meat, the industry standard transformed from family farms to massive feedlots where thousands of birds are raised. To prevent the risk of a diseased bird affecting the entire flock, some farmers administer antibiotics through the feeding supply. Proponents argue that administering low doses of antibiotics eliminates the threat of an infection being spread to consumers.

“The antibiotics keep the birds healthy, and healthy animals have a

steeper growth curve,” says Dr. Mark Melyncuk, professor of biology and nutrition at Bloomsburg University.

Critics highlight the relationship between antibiotics in the meat industry and antibiotic resistance in humans.

The FDA’s approval of an antibacterial drug used in the poultry industry, Baytril 3.23 percent, resulted in the emergence of an antibiotic-resistant strain of the campylobacter bacteria, a common source of food-borne illness in humans. If the bacterium becomes resistant, it may prolong the duration of the illness, and increase the chance for complications.

“Although antibiotic resistance is not yet a huge problem, it has the potential to be if agricultural practices continue,” says Melyncuk.

Because antibiotic resistance can be inherited, the problem may continue to worsen.

“If a single bacterium is antibiotic resistant and it reproduces asexually, the newly formed bacteria will also be resistant. If an antibiotic-resistant and a nonresistant bacterium sexually reproduce, the nonresistant bacterium can, and

probably will, inherit resistance,” says Melyncuk.

John and Todd Hopkins of Forks Farm raise chickens, pigs, and cows without the use of antibiotics or hormones through a “pastured” and “free range” system.

In some industrial farms, chickens are confined to a small area in a vast feedlot and will never see sunlight. The “free-range” label was created to address confinement issues.

To obtain this label, documentation must be submitted and approved by the FSIS, proving the animal has access to the outdoors. However, it doesn’t require the farm to be inspected.

According to the “free-range” label, animals must have “access to the outdoors.” However the standard does not address the outdoor conditions or the accessibility to the outdoors.

“Access to the outdoors can be as small as an open window. Under these conditions, animals are unlikely to leave their food source and venture outside,” says Todd Hopkins. She explains that the egg-laying chickens are raised by a “free-range” system. The chickens are completely

# Unregulated Claims

These claims are not regulated or approved by the United States Department of Agriculture.

- Antibiotic free
- Drug free
- Hormone free
- Pastured
- Naturally raised
- Naturally grown
- Chemical free

# 'Buying locally I know what and how it'

free to roam the pasture and eat insects and grass. The birds often return to a chicken tractor at night to obtain shelter and grain.

The "pastured" system is slightly different from "free-range." Instead of allowing the chickens to roam completely free, the chickens are raised in a movable coops or pastured pens. The pastured pens are bare on the bottom, allowing access to the pasture; the roof protects the birds from predatory birds.

On Forks Farm, the pens are moved twice a day to ensure a constant supply of fresh grass. Because chickens cannot survive on a diet of only grass, their diet is supplemented with "certified organic" feed.

"We have a direct relationship with most of our customers, many of them come to our farmers market during the summer, or stop by the farm store year round," says Hopkins. "Our consumers trust our farming practices because they have the opportunity to talk to us

and see the animals grazing in the pasture," she says.

Although many beef labels boast a "corn fed" diet, critics argue that cows are ruminant animals, and should be grass fed. A ruminant animal has a stomach with four compartments, one of which is the rumen that contains enzymes able to digest grass.

"When animals are on high level of grain, it changes the pH levels in their stomach and makes them more susceptible to diseases," says Rachel Litwhiler-Ribble.

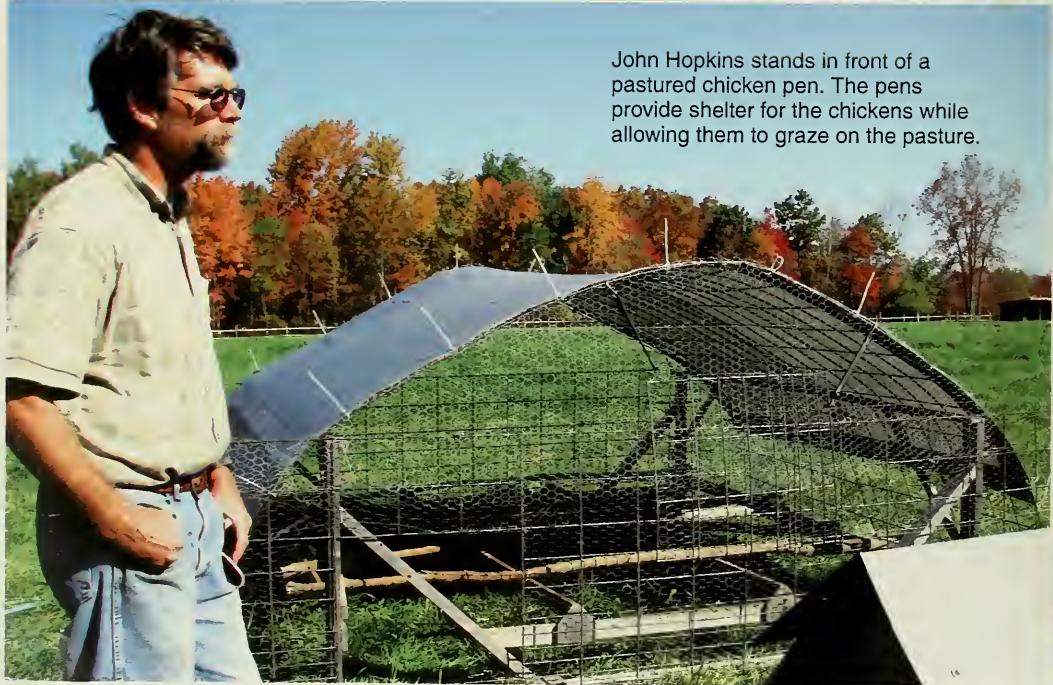
The "grass fed" label was updated in October 2007, by AMS to ensure the cow's diet was derived solely from forage. It prohibits the use of grain and requires access to pasture during the growing season.

Kris Ribble and Rachel Litwhiler-Ribble raise Angus cattle on a strict pasture diet, with unlimited access to pasture.

"We raise our cows on pasture—during the spring, summer, and fall months. During the winter months



John Hopkins stands in front of a pastured chicken pen. The pens provide shelter for the chickens while allowing them to graze on the pasture.



helps guarantee  
I am getting  
what I was raised.'

-Carol Busada



the cows are fed hay raised on the farm. We move the herd at least every three days to ensure a constant supply of fresh grass," says Kris Ribble.

"Grass fed" beef provides several health benefits over cattle fed grain and stored forages. The meat from the cattle of Spring Meadows Farm contains four times the amount of Omega-3 fatty acids than beef from cows fed a feedlot diet, according to a study conducted by the Department of Crop and Soil Science at Pennsylvania State University.

Omega 3 fatty acids cannot be manufactured by the body and must be obtained from food. They play a large role in brain function as well as normal growth and development.

"Grass-fed" cows also have a higher level of Conjugated Linoleic Acid Concentration (CLA).

CLAs promote healthy cardiovascular health.

"Although we are not exactly sure how, CLA reduces the buildup of cholesterol in the artery walls, reducing

the risk for cardiovascular disease," says Melynchuk.

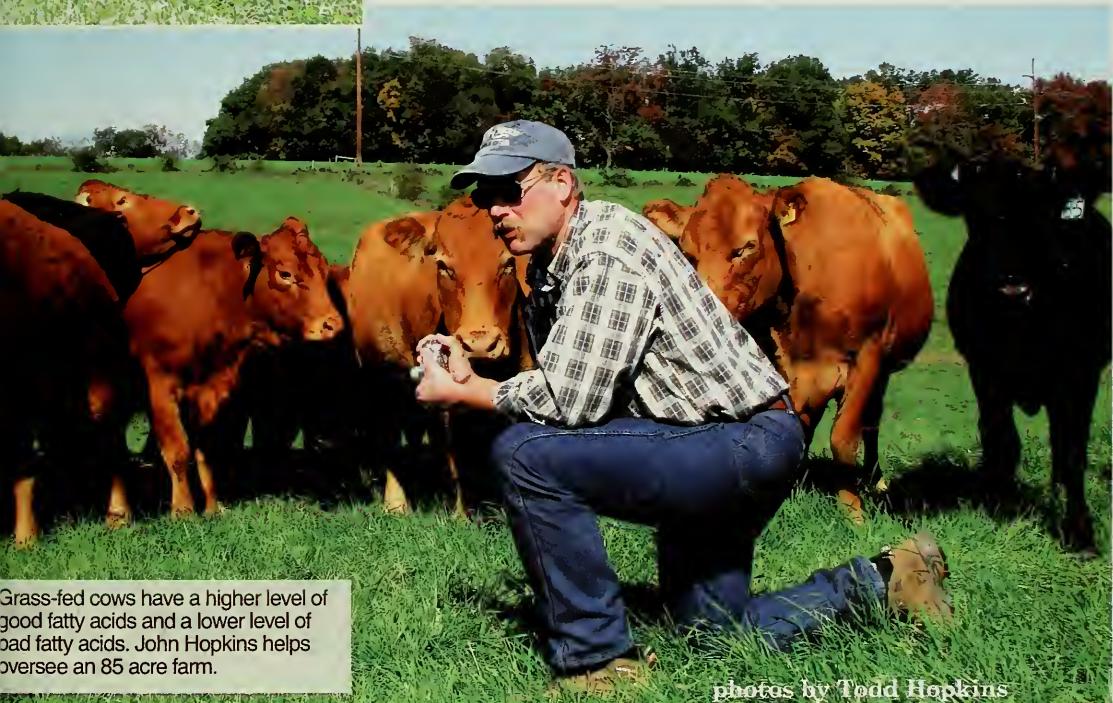
Kris and Rachel cite several reasons as to why people don't buy from their local farmer.

"Customers are accustomed to the convenience of a grocery store and they have lost contact with local farmers and are many times unaware of the superior products that can be purchased locally," says Rachel Litwhiler-Ribble.

The rural counties of Columbia and Montour provide local residents with the opportunity to visit and support local natural farms and farm markets.

"Since Bloomsburg is an agricultural area, a variety of different outlets are available for purchasing local meat, while living in Virginia I used to have to travel over an hour, in North Carolina it was nearly impossible to find," says Busada

*To find your local farm or farmers market, visit [localharvest.org](http://localharvest.org). S*



Grass-fed cows have a higher level of good fatty acids and a lower level of bad fatty acids. John Hopkins helps oversee an 85 acre farm.

photos by Todd Hopkins

# WARNING NO DUMPING

## Almost 400 tons of trash have been identified at 39 illegal dump sites throughout Columbia County

by Brittany Laumakis

Tires, refrigerators, bricks, rusted bikes, animal carcasses and massive amounts of bugs are some of what is commonly found in illegal dumping sites across Columbia County.

Thirty-nine illegal dumping sites have been identified in 12 different municipalities throughout the county by PA CleanWays. With authorization from individual counties and funding provided by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), these sites were analyzed for approximate tons of waste, hazards, potential plans to remove it, and possible solutions for the community.

"Not every resident is notified of illegal dumpsites in their area," says Todd Crouch, program manager for PA CleanWays. All of Columbia County's dump sites were located in rural areas. The first step to end illegal dumping is to determine the extent of the problem.

PA CleanWays has chosen the larger counties with the biggest dumping problems to focus on first. Columbia County's abandoned coal mines are problem areas for dumping. "The earth is torn up already and with a lot of holes, people dump their trash down there," says Bob Rush, a resource specialist for PA CleanWays.

It's been a problem

for years in the county. "A lot of dumping has become hereditary, what we can do is clean it up and educate their kids to break the chain," says Rush. Rush works mostly in eastern Pennsylvania in collaboration with PA CleanWays setting up clean ups with various volunteers and groups.

"Both concerned communities and individuals across Pennsylvania get involved with the problem of illegal dumping," says Crouch.

Dr. Sandra Kehoe-Forutan, Danville, volunteered in the clean up of the Hogsback dumpsite in Greenwood Township as the adviser of Bloomsburg University's Geography and Planning Society (GPS) in April 2007. "It's a major environmental problem, it shows a great disrespect for the natural environment," says Kehoe-Forutan.

During the past year, volunteers participated in four cleanups in Columbia County.

"There was over 100 tons of trash;

we picked up about 154 tires," says Rush of a dump site at the Catawissa Canal. The job was so large that heavy equipment was brought in, followed by the volunteers to conduct hand pickup. This clean up was funded by the Growing Greener grant.

PA CleanWays provides training for all volunteers before the site project begins. Through tight coordination with PA CleanWays, which provided a backhoe, GPS got Hogsback cleaned up in about four hours. Most projects are done between 9 a.m. and noon.

Illegal dumping also contributes to the presence and breeding of mosquitoes. Columbia County sprayed in July 2007 after adult mosquitoes were tested positive for West Nile Virus. The standing water creates a breeding ground for the disease carrying insects.

Along with the Catawissa Canal, nearly half of the sites are near waterways, increasing the chances of polluting the water supply.

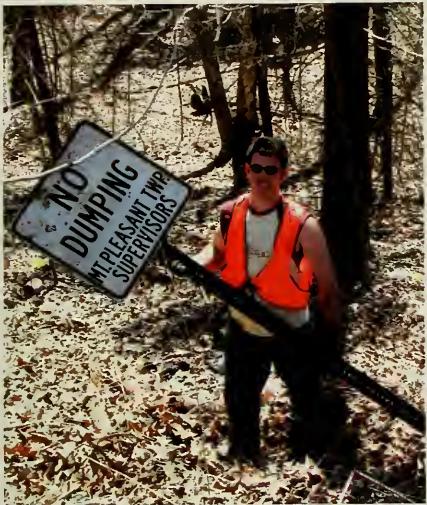
Kehoe-Forutan says of the Hogsback site, "There was a small stream and trash was right in it." Thirteen percent of the sites were directly in the water or wetlands.

"Illegal dumps contribute to pollution of nearby waterways by percolation and run-



Photo by Jennifer Reed

A student from GPS piles garbage bags collected from Hogsback.



Abel Witmer recovers a 'no dumping' sign that was torn down and became trash.

off," Crouch says.

The surveys found that the larger household items can leak toxins into the soil and surface waters. "Pollutants and toxins can also enter private or community drinking water wells," says Crouch. Larger household items, such as air conditioners and refrigerators, can leak Freon, ammonia, mercury, lead, and cadmium.

"We found batteries and they leak toxins into the soil," says Kehoe-Forutan.

Broken glass, rusty metals and toxic substances pose a threat of injury to humans and animals. "We had to be aware of needles and sharp objects," says Kehoe-Forutan.

If a site catches on fire, the air becomes contaminated from the released emissions.

"Animal carcasses allow disease causing pathogens and bacteria to spread," says Crouch.

A lot of what is found at sites can be properly disposed of with little effort. "Unfortunately a lot of townships don't have regular pick up days for larger items, like washers, so people dump it," says Rush. It's a common occurrence to find household appliances at sites.

About 92 percent of the sites sur-

veyed in Columbia were active sites. Constant new trash being added to a site deems it "active". Only two percent were posted with "no dumping" signs.

"Someone had actually knocked down the 'No Dumping' sign over the bank," says Kehoe-Forutan, "and a student had to carry it back up."

One of the common excuses people use for illegal dumping is the lack of recycling in the community. "When people don't want to pay to have things removed, they dump it," says Kehoe-Forutan. Many of the items cleaned at Hogsback were mattresses, sofas, chairs, tires, and bulky items.

"When we went back [to Hogsback] to check, people had actually started dumping again. It's sad because it looked so beautiful, so clean," says Kehoe-Forutan. A possible solution to end dumping is for a volunteer organization or individual to adopt an area. "When someone sees the sign, it lets them know that someone actually cares about that area," says Kehoe-Forutan.

Enforcement of laws and monitoring the sites are successful in less-

ening dumping and littering.

"When word gets out that dumping activity won't be tolerated, dumping decreases," says Crouch. PA CleanWays also asks volunteers to watch for pill bottles, car registrations, and other items that can help identify and track down the person who left it at the site.

"We actually found an entire windshield with a person's car registration on it," says Kehoe-Forutan.

Sites vary in size and when it comes to priority of cleanup, PA CleanWays has to depend on the funds and grants it receives.

"As much as we would like to clean up all the sites, we have to limit the cleanups based on the funding we receive," says Crouch.

"Montour County is on the list but also a much smaller county with less of a problem," says Rush. It is on the schedule to be cleaned up within this year while the other counties in Pennsylvania will be done by 2012.

*[More information about volunteering and specific site details in your area can be found on the PA CleanWays website, [www.pacleanways.org](http://www.pacleanways.org) as well as the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection website [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us).]*

**S**



Volunteers Kevin Watkinson and Kyle Rauch remove a small part of the household items illegally dumped in Hogsback.

# Ridin' Life Set

A Blooms  
her famil  
obstacles  
local ther

Photos by Nina Gandolfo

by Kelly

# ng out e's backs

urg woman and  
persevere through  
ith the help of a  
eutic riding center



**H**eather Hunsinger and her mother, Carol, can hardly keep track of all the ribbons and trophies around their home. They have run out of places to put them, which isn't surprising if you've been horseback riding at Eos Therapeutic Riding Center in Bloomsburg for as long as Heather has. When Heather's mom praises her daughter it's obvious that Heather is beaming with pride, but she smiles and hides her pink face in her hands, leaving her brown curly hair sticking through the tops of her fingers.

Despite her daughter's bashfulness, Carol continues, listing Heather's loves and numerous accomplishments throughout her years, just as any proud mother would.

"We can't make a quick trip to a store without somebody knowing Heather. She has more of a social life than I do," Carol says. Heather loves movies and window shopping. She works part-time at Suncom Industries, an adult training center in Bloomsburg. Each year she helps put on a Christmas show with the Starlight program at Wesley United Methodist Church of Bloomsburg. In her spare time, her favorite thing to do is send greeting cards and bake cookies for friends.

She loves bowling, and has traveled to compete in State College, where Penn State University football coach Joe Paterno signed her shirt. "He said good luck to me in bowling. He signed my shirt and I got to wear it home," she says.

Heather may seem like any average 29-year-old woman, but she has mild mental retardation, and a number of health problems. She has struggled her entire life for acceptance, for equality, and for the chance to live a typical lifestyle. "I guess I was kind of ignorant about children with disabilities," Carol admits.

Due to complications that led to a lack of oxygen at birth, Heather was diagnosed with a developmental delay at 14 months of age. "I wasn't prepared. It's devastating," says Carol, "but what can you do, how can I do anything else but love her?"

Larry Hunsinger, Heather's father, says he knew from the beginning that his daughter's disability wouldn't affect how he felt about her. "They said she has a disability, but what were they comparing her to?" he asks.

Heather didn't start walking until she was almost 18 months old. Because she walked with her feet pointed inward, she had to wear corrective shoes. She also had tight hip abductors which made it difficult to walk.

When she was a toddler, her unstable gait caused her to lose her balance and fall against a ceramic candle holder, creating a U-shaped corneal laceration in her left eye. She still has poor eyesight, even after healing

and years of treatment. "I feel like we're supposed to have eyes in the back of our heads. It makes a mother feel so helpless," Carol says about parenting a child with disabilities.

Larry says, "You wonder if you're a good parent or not, or if it was your fault, but then you see people

uvula in her throat to create a wider air passage, and she recently began wearing a mask at night to provide a constant air flow.

With the help of the program at Eos, Heather Hunsinger has never allowed her disabilities to hold her back from living and loving life,

at Heather's loud voice and outgoing attitude. "I went into protective mode, but she took to it like a trooper," Carol says.

Heather never had any inhibitions. When her mother asks her if she was scared her first time riding a horse, she shrugs and says, "No, it

## • It's fun, I see all my friends and they are happy to see me. •

—Heather Hunsinger

with worse disabilities than she has and you realize you're lucky."

Dealing with their daughter's health troubles has been an endless battle. Heather suffered from kidney infections for seven years, which led to urinary tract infections and temporary use of a catheter bag. Heather has had surgeries for a bone growth on her arm known as Osteochondroma, calcification in her knees, and thyroid nodules. Heather also suffers from sleep apnea, a condition that causes her to stop breathing for short periods of time during sleep. She's had a surgical procedure to remove part of her soft palate and

spreading her free spirit to others, and seeing people for who they really are. That's why Heather Hunsinger is not your average 29-year-old woman.

Heather started therapeutic riding when she was 13. "I think we're part of the woodwork here," Carol jokes.

Carol first heard of Eos at the Special Olympics, where Heather competes in bowling. No one in her family ever had an interest in horseback riding before, and Carol was scared the horses would spook

was easy."

Heather still rides every Tuesday for eight months of the year, and her parents believe the program has done wonders for their daughter, physically, mentally, and emotionally. "She likes the people that work with her. They treat her like a human, not a person with a disability," Larry says.

Heather mostly enjoys the social aspect. "It's fun, I see all my friends and they are happy to see me," Heather says.

Therapeutic horseback riding cen-

Heather Hunsinger stops on the trail behind the Eos barn to shoot some hoops.



ters are becoming more common throughout the United States, but most people know little about riding therapy and the potential help it can give. A horse's gait provides a repetitive pattern of movement very similar to a person's pelvis during normal human walking. "Horses are always accepting, no matter what the special need of the rider is, and they are always in touch with the rider and sensitive to their needs," says Debbie Smith, executive director and founder of the Eos riding center.

The horse's center of gravity shifts forward and backward, up and down, and side to side, just as a human's does. For people bound to a wheel chair, this may be the closest they can get to walking and stretching their muscles on their own. "For a lot of our kids, this may be all that they have," Smith says.

The physical aspect of riding can normalize muscle tone, and improve balance, coordination, strength and mobility. "When these kids get onto horses they just melt. You can see their bodies relax," says Carol, who has witnessed the effects of riding therapy.

Regular horseback riding has improved Heather's walking, helping her to loosen the tight muscles in her legs and allowing her to wear regular shoes. The obstacle courses and challenges she completes on horseback have improved her reading and problem solving skills with puzzles. "When that improves, communication improves," Carol says.

The activities riders participate in have proven to encourage language development, improve attention and memory skills, and generate reasoning skills. The social interaction between the animal, the rider, and the volunteers improves motivation, enhances curiosity, fosters independence, and develops the ability to care for others, both human and animal, says Eos volunteer training information. "The rapport between the riders and the volunteers is phenomenal, hugs are plentiful here," says Carol.

During Heather's therapy session, her instructor, Denise Treven, gives her a list of exercises to remember to perform on horseback. "I do the cones, the figure 8, the logs, and put the bean bags in the buckets," Heather says proudly.

Learning colors and counting can come easy for most children, but children with developmental delays have a difficult time retaining information. "They were able to see at school what she was able

to do because of the riding," Carol says.

Most importantly the program has given Heather self-esteem, confidence, and a supportive and accepting circle of friends. "It builds up her confidence and brings her so much joy. In all these years I can't remember walking in here without someone smiling back at you," Carol says.

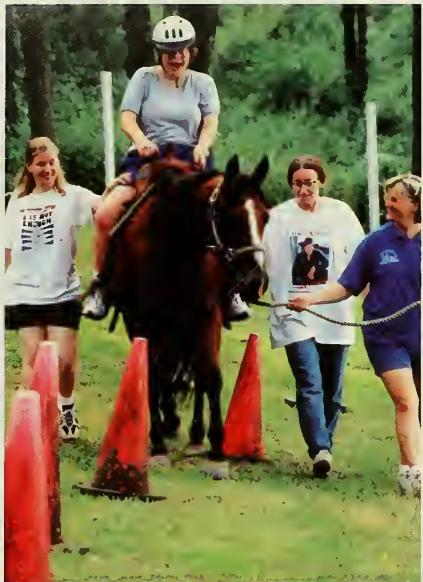
Throughout the hardships Heather has faced in her life, her parents insist that Heather's No. 1 priority is caring for others. "She's always thinking of everybody else," Carol says. On the way to a routine surgery to remove her tonsils at Geisinger Medical Center, Heather said, "Mom, we have to stop at the dollar store." When her mother asked why, Heather said that she had to get cards to thank her doctors.

Shortly after waking up from

**‘ She’s taught me  
that it’s okay to  
be different. A  
disability doesn’t  
make a person  
any more or any  
less of a person.  
It’s what’s inside.’**

—Carol Hunsinger





Heather weaves her horse through an obstacle course at Eos.

Heather's family, like many families with special needs children, is forced to deal with people who are critical towards those with disabilities. "I don't see a lot of people who are judgmental; we've come a long way as a society with accepting others, but there are people who do, and that's their problem," Carol says.

Carol and Larry brush off people who judge them or their daughter, and believe that Heather has helped them to forgive others. "She's taught me a lot; she's taught me that it's okay to be different. A disability doesn't make a person any more or any less of a person. It's what's inside," Carol says.

Larry says he's learned how to be accepting when things don't go as planned. Heather has showed him "how you can't change them, and

the procedure, Heather made her mother go to the information desk of the hospital to get a list of names of the doctors and nurses who took care of her. Heather, who is allergic to pain medications, was more concerned with writing out her thank-you cards than the fact that she was recovering from her surgery with nothing more than regular aspirin.

Recently, when Heather was back at Geisinger because of sinus and respiratory infections, she was treated by a physician who still had her card hanging on his fridge, nearly 20 years later. "She must have had an impression on his life too," Larry says.

Smith says Heather's kindness to others is her best quality, and that she strives to be friends with all of the other riders at Eos, no matter what disability they have.

"She treats them like brothers and sisters, she's comfortable with everyone she's around. There's no age limitation, no special needs limitation; she wants to make everybody happy," Smith says.

an attitude like so what, we'll get through it."

The Hunsinger family knows that Heather is unique, not because of her disability, but because of her spirit. "She cares about people unconditionally, you don't have to be something you're not, you don't have to buy her love and friendship," Carol says.

Heather is thrilled that the new riding season has started. "I make new friends, new memories," she says.

For Heather, the riding season means seeing her friends, her riding instructor of 14 years, and the volunteers that constantly praise her and help her to reach her goals. "I'm happy to see everybody here," Heather says.

For her family, it means another season that Heather feels a sense of camaraderie, a sense of self worth, and a sense that she is just as important and special as anyone else. "She's accepted here," Carol says, "and she knows that." **S**

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Pat Zeblisky



Heidi Fletcher

## New Dawn and a New Beginning

Eos is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping people of all ages with physical and mental disabilities. The program provides special needs people educational and therapeutic activities, increased confidence, and a circle of support, through equestrian based lessons, says Debbie Smith, executive director and founder of EOS Therapeutic Riding Center.

"Doctor's don't see outside the box, they don't realize there are goals out there to be met without scientific structure," says Smith.

The program was founded in 1991 after Smith suffered a back injury and was confined to a wheelchair for over a year. "I wanted to help people who go through the same thing I went through," she says. The name "Eos" is a shortened form of the Greek word *Eohippus*, meaning "new dawn, new beginning." It is also the name of the first horse of evolution. "I felt that a new dawn and new beginning was great, because that's what our kids are getting," says Smith.

Smith began the program with just seven riders and two ponies out on loan. Seventeen years later, Eos is a year round operation involving 90 riders, 10 horses, five instructors, and a multitude of volunteers and benefactors. Eos was initially able to expand after receiving a \$152,000 community development grant from Columbia County in 1998. The grant allowed the

program to build a large indoor arena, permitting more space and insuring therapy sessions regardless of weather.

Smith says that the program would not be possible without community involvement and those who donate their time. "Anyone can be a volunteer, they just have to love people and love life," she says. Even with the help it receives, the non-profit still struggles to raise funds and to find enough volunteers.

Eos has a waiting list says Smith, and has had one "for the past seven or eight years." Despite the demand for riding sessions, and the expenses of running the program, Eos has never turned a rider away due to the inability to pay. "What better gift can you give someone, than a period of time with total happiness," Smith says.

Running Eos has taught Smith to appreciate what she has. "Whatever challenges are thrown at you and however tough things look, there are always ways to get around problems and issues, and there is always someone out there in worse shape than you are," she says.

*[For information about volunteering or therapy sessions, contact Smith at 570-784-5445 or through e-mail at [Eosriding@wmconnect.com](mailto:Eosriding@wmconnect.com).]*

Evan Radise



Noah Hartman



William Manning



Brad Vargo



Photos by Lynne Miller

# Classic Cars

# High FASHION

by Antonella Dinnocenzo

Photos by Annelise Chayka



Leaning against his remodeled purple and grey three window 1932 Ford Coupe, Tom Cesare looks back on the ride of his life, one that combines fashion and auto restorations.

Born in Queens, N.Y., Cesare became aquatinted with the world of fashion.

The different cultures that surround New York helped shape what Cesare now refers to as his "knack for fashion." After graduating from Queens Community College and the Fashion Institute of Technology, Cesare went on to Alexander's, a large department store on Lexington Avenue in Manhattan. There, he became the buyer for ladies' accessories.

"In the big city, people are dressing for style and purpose. There is a higher standard there," says Cesare.

Five years later, he went to Capador's, a manufacturer of ladies' accessories, where he became a partner for the purchasing, design, and quality control of foreign markets. As the outside man in ladies' accessories he purchased the products and then resold them to fit the latest trends.

"You have to be open minded in fashion. You have to be able to step out and break tradition."

Cesare explains, "You have have to be out there and gamble with colors. Hit all of these things the right way and you've got a winner."

Cesare took this philosophy with him while he traveled throughout the world to find the most marketable items

available. He remembers taking unique and different products to make coordinated efforts to create new products.

"Each area has a specialty," Cesare explains. Italy, he recalls, was proficient in leather handbags, the Orient featured belts and ladies wigs, and India revolved around fabrics.

**"Never take anything for granted and always try to be contracted in your thinking."**

Cesare says, "If the style of a boot is really hot and you notice that in the far distance they are making a ladies hat with studs on it, try to incorporate them both. Make the good boot and incorporate the good stones on it."

After his business partner, Irving Paul, died, Cesare moved to Bloomsburg. He used to visit an uncle who lived in Berwick. "I saw a lot that I liked. I found the area very relaxing and slow paced," Cesare says. He took a part-time job working as the seafood manager for Giant Markets, Bloomsburg. "The purchasing end of fashion related to purchasing timely items and the proper quantities at Giant," he says.

As a child, Cesare went to car meets at Nathan's Hot Dogs one night a week where he showed off his car, a 1957 pink Chevy. Since then Cesare has remodeled four cars.

Photo by Tom Cesare



1955 Chevrolet 210 Series

**"The best awards that you can get, however, are comments from the general public when they commend you about your vehicle."**

**"Remodeling a car is like coordinating an outfit,"**

he says, pointing out that "certain colors you can and can't get away with. You have to be able to coordinate the model of the car with the color that suits it."

Cesare takes bits and pieces of a car and puts them together to see what he can create, just like matching a shirt with a pair of jeans.

"The trial and error process of designing a car is similar to picking the right accessories out for what someone is wearing," he explains.

Instead of getting what he needs from a boutique of a designer store, he buys new auto parts or goes to junk yards and swap meets. Carlisle became the new Manhattan to locate items for his latest designs.

Cesare now has more than 100 trophies for his classic cars. He gets satisfaction out of awards given by car magazines, or recognition he gets at national events. He attends about a dozen national events a year, and about 25 local events.

"The best awards that you can get, however, are comments from the general public when they commend you about your vehicle," Cesare says.

For Tom Cesare, classic cars are like finding the perfect outfit and adding something to make it his own. **S** 31

1932 Ford Coupe



Photo by Tom Cesare

**S**TANDING AGAINST A CHAIN LINK FENCE that separates fan from driver, dreaming of one day doing the driving, a young boy of 6 focused on the action in front at a local New Oxford track, only imagining of his future. "Ever since that race, driving was something I always wanted to do," says Ray Bull, of Bloomsburg.

Bull, now 38 years old, has won over 100 races, was the ARDC midget champion six times, and has raced on dirt with some of NASCAR's giants.

Bull has his father to thank for sparking his interest in cars. Maurice Bull couldn't have known the magic that was turned on in his son's soul, but says Ray, "The passion was always there."

Growing up in New Oxford, known

races in a season and started to meet more contacts. One of those individuals was Spike Gillespie, owner of Gillespie signs in Bloomsburg. Gillespie presented Bull with the opportunity to race his Micro Sprint for one of the remaining races of the season. At the time, Bull was 21 years old.

"Driving was something that I always wanted to do, I just never had

just took it and ran with it," he says.

Gillespie also made out well with his decision to put Bull behind the driver's seat. From 1991, his first full season, until 1996, Bull collected 56 wins. Gillespie also gained a son-in-law when Bull married his daughter, Jan, making racing a family affair.

After conquering the Micro Sprints division, Bull moved up into the

# THE PASSION WAS

From boyhood, the racing bug has been

Photos courtesy of Tammy Rae Benscoter



2002



Bull with his wife, Jan, and daughter, Lauren, after winning at Dixieland Speedway.



for sprint car racing, the young racer began helping out as a crew member for local sprint car drivers. What started out as a weekend job turned into a couple days a week at the race shop, followed by attending two races in a weekend.

At the end of the 1990 season, Bull's determination paid off. He had been attending as many as 80

the money to do it," says Bull. What he needed was someone else to own the car so the financial responsibilities wouldn't be so harsh.

"Spike called me up during the winter months and asked me if I wanted to drive all of the next year," says Bull. Having only driven once, Bull was surprised by the offer.

"It was a chance of a lifetime so I

ranks of the American Racing Drivers Club midget class in 1996. He knew little about midget racing.

"I was coming into a whole new division that could run with a wing, without a wing, on dirt or on pavement," says Bull.

The ARDC was organized in 1939 by a group of East Coast drivers and owners to look after the interests of

midget drivers and owners. When the formation of the club became public, virtually all midget drivers signed up. Racing legend Mario Andretti was one of many who came from the ARDC division.

Bull found his success racing in ARDC. Between 2000 and 2005, Bull was the ARDC midget champion. Two of those years he earned the title of winningest midget driver in the nation, scoring a combined 10 feature race wins in 2001 and 11 in 2004 out of 17 racing events held, two of which he did not compete.

While racing with ARDC, Bull went to Tulsa, Okla., to compete in the inaugural Chili Bowl in January. The best wingless drivers, including some of NASCAR's greats who hadn't forgotten where they got their start, race side by side in the dirt.

says, "once you make it, you can race and have a good time." He explains the Bowl as the only race that is a party and then a race breaks out. "People are relaxed, playing games, throwing Frisbee; it's more of a social event, and it's one place that you can't get upset if you don't do well," he says.

Though the Chili Bowl is filled with as many as 70 champions in all divisions all racing at one time, running next to some of racing's "superstars" doesn't hinder Bull's concentration. To Bull, racing against Tony Stewart, Kasey Kahne, and J.J. Yeley, all of whom compete full time in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series, is just like racing next to another competitor.

"I don't let that stuff bother me, because if you let it, then you're already beat before you even get on the racetrack," he says.

His wife and three daughters travel with him to every race. "The kids love it, it's like a mini vacation every time we go," says Bull.

Another individual who makes racing special is Bull's father. "The quality time that I get to spend with my father is great," says Bull. Now that his parents have retired, a weekend trip to the races consists of his wife and daughters riding along in his parents' motor home. "I get to the track with my dad by my side and we go everywhere together. That part's great," says Bull.

Although some opportunities arose for Bull to pursue a career in racing, after watching some fellow drivers move away, take 10 years of their lives to try and build a career, and now have nothing, or never know what could have been due to a major

# ALWAYS THERE

active in Ray Bull.

by Kristin Saltzer



Bull celebrates with the checkered flag after winning at New Egypt Speedway.

Bull describes the Chili Bowl as a "chess match," with each driver constantly having to plan his next move. "You have to be good, and you have to be lucky," he says.

"You would think once you make the show that's the most stressful part of it, but it's not, that's when you relax," he recalls. Getting into the race itself was stressful, but Bull

Bull's best finish was fifth in 2005. "I never thought I'd be happy about a fifth place finish, but you are racing in this little track, you have this whole week of build up; 15,000 people around you. It's not a win, but it was pretty special," he remembers.

Racing has always been a family-oriented sport, and that is where his biggest supporters come from.

racing accident, Bull knew putting his children and family first would have a more rewarding payout in the end. When not at the track, Bull is a sign maker at Gillespie Signs. What's left of his spare time he uses to golf and fish, but most importantly spends time with his family and be there for his girls.

After the end of the 2006 season,

Bull cut back on his schedule. "Going to the races is fun and my family enjoys it, but if you commit to that every week there's no going to the beach, or doing things with the girls that I think they need to do," says Bull.

Taking on a limited schedule doesn't mean that he is not to be feared. "The Raging Bull," as he's often known, scored his 50th career ARDC victory in May 2007 at Susquehanna Speedway Park. He is currently fourth on the ARDC all-time win list.

He will continue to compete in ARDC races around the state, but limit the trips to North Carolina and New York. Trips are planned to Illinois, Indiana, and to the Midget Nationals in

Knoxville. "It used to be the quantity, how many races can you fit in; now with the family it's more about quality," says Bull. "We ran for the points for six years straight, and I cherished that time, but it got tough," he says.

The Chili Bowl, however, will continue to stay on the schedule. *S*

**"You have to be good, and you have to be lucky."**

—Ray Bull

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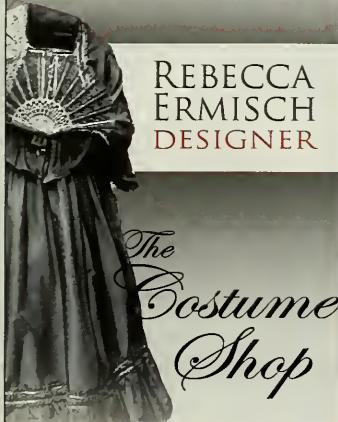
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# HIGH SCHOOL with a college TWIST

High school students juggle classes, extracurriculars, and their social lives to enter college with more than a year of credits

Story and photos by Jenna Wisniewski

The first time Courtney King sat in a college classroom, she was scared to ask her professor a question. "The professors are the most intimidating part," says King, a senior at Montgomery High School. King is one of over 100 high school students who are taking college classes at Bloomsburg University.

Eliza Reed, a senior at Shamokin Area High School, adds another perspective to college work. "There really isn't that much extra work; you just have to study," Reed says.

King notes, "Even though many of the classes are tougher than high school, I still receive mostly A's and B's." King also remembers the uneasy feeling of being a high school student in college. "Because I am still in high school, I sometimes feel out of place," says King. Both girls now accept college as second nature.

"No one even knows I am in high school so I can just do my own thing," says Reed, "because the college atmosphere is so different than high school." They are both surprised at how different college is from high school, but believe they are getting the best of both worlds.

Both students are attending BU through the Advanced College Experience (ACE). ACE, established in 2003, allows high school students to familiarize themselves with



Courtney King and Eliza Reed discuss academics while walking between classes on the BU campus.

college while still attending high school. "It's a great way for students to experience college before becoming a full time student at a university," says Karen Murtin, head of BU's ACE program. Because many of the fees are waived, students can attend college and pay only 25 percent of the price a full time student pays.

King, 18, will graduate from high school with 18 college credits. "Because I have taken these classes, I can start college in the fall with a crutch. If I do poorly in a class and need to drop it, I have 18 credits to fall back on," King says. She is undecided about her major but is considering pharmaceutical sales. However, BU doesn't offer that major so she would have to transfer later on in her college career.

Reed, 17, will graduate high school with credits from BU, community college classes, and AP exams. Her 39 credits are equivalent to almost three semesters worth. She hopes to become a physical therapist. Reed believes the credits will help lessen her workload no matter which major she decides to take. Both girls divide their time between high school and college.

Each morning they go to their high school classes, and then leave between 10 and 11:30 a.m. to arrive on BU's campus in time to start the second part of their day. "Freedom is the best part of this experience," says King. Unlike Reed, King had read about the ACE program online. "No one at my school had really heard about the program. My mom and I had to search online and then ask my guidance counselor about it before I could even apply," King says.

Reed found out about the ACE program when a representative spoke at her school. Reed was then approached by her guidance counselor and began to think about the possibility of the program. Her older sister had already taken classes through the ACE program and reported a good experience. "I saw how it prepared my sister and how much she liked it," Reed says.

Like King and Reed, Jenna Mordan, an 18-year-old

senior at Central Columbia High School is also enrolled in the ACE program. Although King and Reed are taking several college classes, Mordan is satisfied with just one. "It's kind of the thing to do at Central [Columbia High School]. A lot of students take advantage of the ACE program because we are so close to the university," she says. Mordan believes that even though she is taking only one college class, she will benefit from the experience next year when she attends BU full time.

"I wanted to get the nervousness of the first college class over with before I became a full time student," she says. Mordan's only college course is Interpersonal Communications, an introduction course at the university.

Mordan, like King and Reed, remembers her first day as intimidating. No one knew she was in high school and she wanted to keep it that way. On her first day there was a phrase the professor kept using that she didn't understand. "I had to confront the professor after class," she says, "and she explained 'Blackboard' was an online site that professors use to post assignments and grades through the website. The professor was so nice and even took me to her office to show me how to use Blackboard so I wasn't confused anymore."

Many people believe that because high school students are taking college courses, they are over achievers or prodigies. Although Mordan believes taking college classes while still in high school is an accomplishment, she doesn't believe she is a child genius. "People seemed to be impressed but I don't take the stereotype in a positive way," Mordan says.

Reed has similar views about the stereotype. "I'm not a prodigy or a genius, and I am only a year younger than many of the students here," she says. Reed believes taking college classes will give her a head start when she attends BU this fall as a freshman.

King agrees. "It's mostly adults that think I'm a child prodigy or genius," says King, but "I'm really just like any other high school kid. I just wanted a feel of

**"It's a great way for the students to experience college before becoming a full time student at a university."**

**—Karen Murtin**



**"I wanted to get the nervousness of the first college class over with before I became a full time student."**

**—Jenna Mordan**

the college life and a way to jump-start my college career." Because both girls believe their genius status is overrated, they just live their lives day by day as high school and college students.

"I can still be a high school kid, but receive more academic stimulation," Reed says. Reed and King as well as most ACE students, agree that taking college classes is

not as hard as they thought it would be.

"I have lots of time for all my activities. I take college classes at the same time I would be taking high school ones," says Reed, "so the time frame is about the same as if I were finishing my day at high school." Her extracurricular activities consume her day: anyone who didn't know her would wonder how she ever fits everything in. "I have time for



Jenna Mordan is taking one college class to get over her nervousness before enrolling at BU in the fall.

everything. I see a lot of my friends during my play practices or my sports practices, so they don't really ever feel left out," she says.

King, like Reed, also believes she has time for all her activities. "Even though I may have to spend a bit more time studying, I have plenty of time to get it all in. You just have to make schedules and stick to them," King says.

All three girls agree having a schedule and keeping an agenda is the best advice for someone in the ACE program. Reed believes she would lose her head without her agenda.

"You need it to keep all your activities, classes, and exams straight. Once you have that down, it's really not that bad," says Reed.

King agrees that having a schedule helps keep her life in order. "Sometimes there is a conflict with an exam or a game back home, but most professors will work around it and as long as I let them know ahead of time, an exam can be moved with little hassle," King says. All three girls believe that responsibility is the biggest difference between high school and college.

As the girls leave BU after their first day of classes they know it has already been a great experience. "I took college classes to challenge myself more. I have however, benefited from the experience in more than one way," King says.

Reed's views are similar. "This program and this school have helped me learn what college is like, and I can't wait to come here in the fall," says Reed. Most ACE students agree that starting college with experience is their idea of a perfect beginning. **S**

Monique Grimord, 17, of Central Columbia High School, is attending an Introduction to Drawing class at Bloomsburg University through the ACE program. Grimord, who plans to major in graphic design at Susquehanna University, wanted to get a few credits before starting college in the fall.



# Fundamental

## Local schools are making reading enjoyable

by Ashley Seigfried



Fourth-grade student Michele Kotarsky of Nescopeck Elementary School is one out of millions of students who have become fond of reading. Kotarsky, like many other students, is involved in Reading is Fundamental. "I really like getting to choose a book and being able to keep it," says Michele.



Makayla Hess, Paige Superko, and Taylor Brown participate in RIF at Nescopeck Elementary School.

RIF has provided books for children across the United States. This non-profit organization, founded by Margaret McNamara in 1966, began as a small program at three elementary schools in Washington, D.C. It's now in about 20,000 schools in the United States. About 16 million books are provided for 4.6 million children every year, according to RIF.

"RIF has really encouraged me to read more and I have finished every book that I have received," says Tristan Delp, fourth-grader at Nesopeck Elementary school. Lindsey Anderson, a fifth-grader at Nesopeck Elementary School, says she has saved all of her RIF books and now has her own personal library.

"RIF is all about encouraging children and their families to read and helping them understand the importance of reading," says Cheryl Pasukin, RIF coordinator for the Berwick School District. This year more than 5,000 books will be distributed to the children in the Berwick elementary schools. Millville Elementary School and the four elementary schools in Berwick all take part in the program. The organization primarily provides a literacy program for underprivileged chil-

dren. RIF tries to teach every child about the value of books and the importance of reading. "The aim is to get the kids motivated about reading. By providing free books for children it helps low income families build a home library of books to read at home," says Pasukin. RIF also hopes to build stronger community based childrens and family literacy programs.

The program is designed to have volunteers come in during the school day, read stories to the students, and encourage them to read. The volunteers often come up with a motivational activity or a theme for that specific day.

"I will often choose a favorite children's author and read aloud a portion of that book," says Cathy Kline, RIF coordinator for the Nesopeck Elementary School. One activity at Nesopeck was to have children donate a "gently used" book to Katrina victims. The activity was a success and they learned how important reading is to all children in the nation, says Pasukin. Activities may include arts and crafts, fun games, scavenger hunts, and more. They help the students to have an enjoyable time and use their own sense of creativity.

"Salem Elementary School did a Snow Blizzard Reading Contest where the children read lots of books. For each book they read, they earned a snowflake to hang in the hallway. They tried to make the school look like there was a blizzard inside," says Pasukin.

At the end of each session, students get the chance to pick a book. "RIF has made reading fun for me, and there is always a good selection of books," says Tyler Evans, fourth-grade student at Nesopeck Elementary School. "Students are offered books at a variety of reading levels so that they can find one that is just right for them," adds Kline. It is all about promoting a love for literature, children are not taught how to read through this program. "By the end of their elementary school career, students will have a shelf full of their very own books to read and enjoy over and over!" says Pasukin.

The funding is provided through RIF, the federal government, local businesses and community members. For each order of books RIF covers 75 percent of the cost and the other 25 percent is paid for through donations, Pasukin says.

However, President Bush's budget plan for 2009, eliminates RIF's funding of \$25.5 million. Carol H. Rasco, RIF president, says unless Congress reinstates the funds RIF will be cancelled. For this year, RIF's budget is intact.

Next year, there may be no RIF programs. **S**

# Sheriff Sales:

## The connection between adjustable rate mortgage loans and foreclosures

by Joe Korba and Chris Fetterman

**T**he subprime loan crisis, severe increases in unemployment, and the reality of the nation at the beginning of a recession has led to a significant increase in house foreclosures and sheriff's sales in Columbia County.

Foreclosures in the county have risen from an average of about 30 a year to over 100. Last year was a record year for foreclosures, with 120 homes put onto the auction block, according to Sheriff Tim Chamberlain. During the first quarter of 2008, there were 18 sheriff's sales.

The problem may have begun in 2003, says Chamberlain, "when interest rates were incredibly low." At the time, says Chamberlain, "people were re-mortgaging, getting the adjustable rates, and now they can't pay them." The rates soon shot up to more than 20 percent in some

cases, rising at such a rate "that the borrower is blindsided by monthly bills that keep increasing as the economy gets worse." With increased unemployment, a two income household was hit by the workplace economy, outsourcing to other countries, and by the rising interest rates. "It is very difficult to afford a home with one income anymore," Chamberlain says.

The sheriff also blames the lending industries for some of the problem. He believes lending institutions should have been "more responsible in giving mortgages to people, they should know that they can pay it."

[Several organizations assist people in danger of losing their homes to foreclosure. For more information, contact the Homeownership Preservation Foundation, a federal counseling service, at 1-888-995-HOPE (4673).] **S**



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# Mentality

Story by Jon Sten, photos by Chris Fetterman



Gallery owner Eric Shurmaitis explains his work  
titled "Jagged-Edged Triangular Teens."

# SURREALITY

# W

edged between a cigar shop and a restaurant in downtown Bloomsburg, a small business provides an opportunity for local artists to showcase their creativity and artistic vision. Bluegrass melodies hum softly in the background as customers browse the paintings and photographs which adorn the walls of the gallery. "Open Your Eyes to Dream is an extension of my living room," says Eric Shurmaitis, gallery owner and artist. "This gallery is my baby," says Shurmaitis, who launched his business in April 2005.

Shurmaitis used money he had accumulated from years of working "terrible jobs" throughout various parts of the

U.S.: selling vacuums and pumping gas in Eugene, Ore.; delivering pizzas and selling cars in Wilkes-Barre; mowing lawns in Bear Creek; and even selling timeshares in the Poconos. "Some of those jobs were frustrating," he says, "but I always knew that I was stocking money away for something of my own."

Shurmaitis had gone to Oregon on the advice of a good friend and then eventually settled back in Pennsylvania. He landed in Bloomsburg when he discovered the current location. "Basically, I wanted a decent amount of space for a reasonable price in a town where there was a cultural interest in the arts," he says.

Once the property was secure, Shurmaits' unique vision came into existence, fulfilling fantasies that began when he was very young.

When he was 5, his parents enrolled him in private art lessons. "I've been obsessed with art ever since," he says, but admits that running an art gallery in a small town like Bloomsburg can be a struggle. However, unlike most business owners, Shurmaitis is not overly obsessed with profit margins. Instead, he is more concerned with creating a positive environment within

"Each individual visitor reacts **differently** when they walk through the door. Some seem generally **happy** with the place while others run away in **fear**."

— Eric Shurmaitis

# Open Your Eyes To Dream

## REVOLUTION IN BLOOM

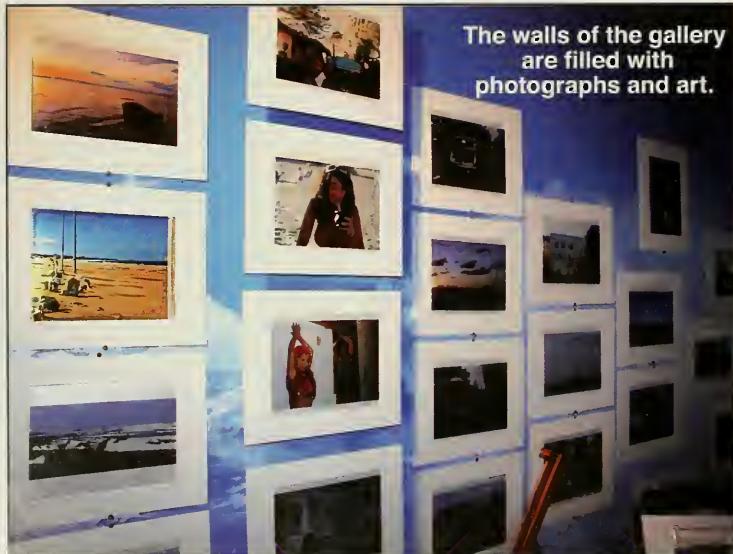
Eric Shurmaitis is seen through the front door of his Main Street Gallery

the community, a place where learning and creativity are the primary focus. "More small towns need a place like this. Too many people believe art galleries belong in a city," he says. Small galleries inspire artists to "crawl out of the cracks" of communities, because they suddenly realize a place exists where they can showcase their gift, he says.

(Right): Matt Vanderslice's Rendition of Caravaggio's "Works of Mercy."

the costs of running the gallery and provide an opportunity for more local residents to get involved in the creative arts. Most of the bands he selects are from Pennsylvania, but some have traveled from New York City to play at the gallery.

One theme that resonates throughout Shurmaitis' philosophy of life is the love of travel.



After graduating high school in Wilkes-Barre, Shurmaitis earned an associate's degree in painting/illustration from Luzerne County Community College. After a few years of traveling, he moved to Bloomsburg, opening the gallery he had been designing in his mind for years.

Since its opening, Shurmaitis' vision for his gallery has expanded to include yoga classes, small-scale stage plays, and live bands. "I look for mostly up-and-coming bands," he says.

These activities help cover

Before he moved to Bloomsburg, he spent a summer backpacking and biking through Europe, where he briefly thought about relocating. He has endured a cross-country road trip through the southern United States and managed to explore much of the Northwest. "I just love to travel and meet other artists," he says. In August, Shurmaitis is planning his next unorthodox adventure, a bike trip north with no particular pre-planned itinerary. "That's how I traveled through Europe," he says, "and I met so many interesting people. Traveling on a bicycle forces you to take it slow and meet as many people as you possibly can."

Shurmaitis views his gallery as a temporary piece of his life, a temporary location not limited to Bloomsburg. "Right now, I'm trying to find a handful of trustworthy people to pass on the gallery to," he says. But his vision of Open Your Eyes to Dream goes beyond being confined to one place. "I want to open more galleries all across the country," the 27-year-old says. A close friend, Matt Brosch, is currently surveying locations in Asheville, N.C., the future home of Open Your Eyes to Dream 2.

Most of the gallery pieces are priced

between a few dollars and several hundred dollars making them affordable to the general population. "Each individual visitor reacts differently when they walk through the door," says Shurmaitis, "some seem generally happy with the place while others run away in fear." However, he explains that art galleries can be intimidating, so he firmly believes in an open door policy for all, regardless of social standing.

Shurmaitis maintains that creative outlets are crucial to measure the well-being of a small community. His passion for artistic culture seems to resonate through his every action. According to Shurmaitis, he considers himself an "abstract mixed media artist" whose current focus deals with human beings and the dream which they collectively experience. "I have been trying to paint a clearer picture of what they want from life and help them to see new possibilities," he says. By launching Open Your Eyes to Dream in downtown Bloomsburg, this young artist has in fact fulfilled his dreams by offering others a chance to cultivate their creativity and begin to bring their own individual dreams to fruition. **S**



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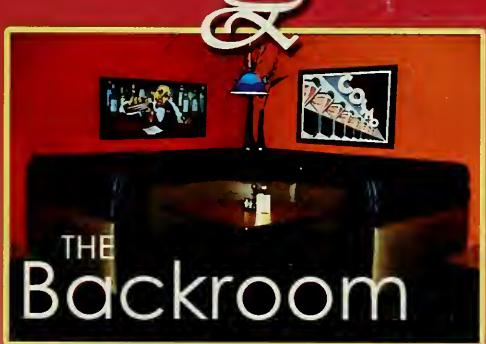
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